

# **CARLSBAD PROJECT WATER OPERATIONS & WATER SUPPLY CONSERVATION EIS NEPA PROCESS FACT SHEET**

## **What is NEPA?**

- The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 establishes a basic framework for encouraging environmental protection in the United States.
- There are two primary objectives of NEPA:
  1. Ensure that agencies consider every significant aspect of a proposed project's environmental impact.
  2. Inform and involve the public of potential impacts and alternatives.
- The NEPA process is a set of activities to gather information on, analyze, and document the potential environmental effects of the proposed project.

## **When is the NEPA Process Required?**

- NEPA is required when a Federal action, involving Federal funding, Federal permits and policy, Federal facilities or equipment, or Federal employees, that may have impacts on the human environment is taken.

## **Why is Action Needed and What is Being Proposed?**

- The purpose of the Bureau of Reclamation's (Reclamation) proposed federal action is to conserve the Pecos bluntnose shiner, a federally threatened fish species, and to conserve the Carlsbad Project water supply. The underlying need for Reclamation action is compliance with the Endangered Species Act and Reclamation's responsibility to conserve the Carlsbad Project water supply.
- To meet this need, Reclamation is proposing to revise operations of Sumner Dam and other infrastructure related to the Carlsbad Project.

## **Lead Agencies**

- Federal, state and local agencies, including at least one federal agency, may act as joint lead agencies to prepare an EIS. The Bureau of Reclamation and the New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission have the primary responsibility and are the joint lead agencies for this EIS.

### **What actions triggered the NEPA Process for this project?**

- Actions that trigger NEPA Reclamation's re-operation of Sumner Dam and associated management of Carlsbad Project conservation storage in Santa Rosa, Brantley, and Avalon Reservoirs, possible changes in water operations and management within the Fort Sumner Irrigation District, and implementation of water acquisition and management programs as needed to comply with the Endangered Species Act and to avoid impairing Carlsbad Project water supplies.

### **What environmental documentation will be prepared?**

- The Bureau of Reclamation and New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission will prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) addressing the potential environmental and socioeconomic impacts from the proposed action.

### **How will the public be involved in the NEPA Process for this project?**

- Two major opportunities for the public to become involved in the Carlsbad Project Water Operations & Water Supply Conservation EIS are: (1) at the beginning of the NEPA process during the public scoping period, and (2) after the Draft EIS has been prepared. Additional workshops to solicit additional public input may be scheduled during the preparation of the EIS.
- During the scoping period, four public meetings will be conducted during the week of October 21, 2002. Meetings will be held in Santa Rosa, Ft. Sumner, Carlsbad, and Roswell, New Mexico.
- Written comments, including letters, faxes, or e-mails, will be accepted throughout the process; however, the scoping process officially ends on December 6, 2002.
- During scoping, the public is encouraged to help define the range of issues to be addressed in the NEPA evaluation, suggest sources of relevant data, and suggest analysis methods for inclusion in the EIS.
- The Draft EIS will be released for a 60-day public review and comment period in the fall of 2003.

### **Where do we send comments?**

- Written comments regarding the scope and content of the EIS should be addressed to:  

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